Futile Devices

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Futile Devices

by bardamhuir

Summary

'He didn’t know how he knew the man was an Omega. Omegan men were quite rare in the first place, but he didn’t even look especially Omegan at first glance. He had hollow cheekbones, dark, hooded eyes, pale eyebrows. But actually, Will thought, you could see the classic Omegan of sculptures and fine oil paintings, if you looked the right way. A full, defined, strangely curved mouth with a rosy colour. The cheekbones, although hollow, were feline in their height and curves. He had long, lithe limbs, honey-hued skin with an olive tone. Fine, soft-looking sandy hair. He was exotic, in a way. And his eyes were boring holes into Will.'

Will is the prince of a faraway land who is bored with his everyday court life. Hannibal comes to work at the palace, with ulterior motives of his own, planning to seduce the prince and use him. But everything becomes twisted and complicated: this is a Hannibal fanfic, after all.

Chapter One

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

A stag, a black-feathered stag that flew on powerful wings through the twilight blue sky piercing it like a membrane. Blood flowed from the tear, so much that everything was red, and two eyes the same colour as the blood stared, unblinking, and the moonlight turned everything silver, as a twisted black tree constricted Will's throat-

Will's eyes opened with a start, and he was faced with the top of his four-poster bed, the ceiling of it embroidered with an intricate pattern of vines and flowers. He stared at the said pattern for hours every morning. Yellow, red and blue flowers against a forest green backdrop. A pale green formed their vines, stems, and leaves. It had been stitched by hand, and to the left upper corner there was a small crooked line in one of the leaves, obviously a mistake. Will was surprised it hadn't been picked up on.

He had been awake for two hours now. Suddenly restless, Will swung his legs out of bed, and stood, stretching. Every day was the same: he was even roused from the same nightmares every morning for the past few weeks. But he almost preferred the nightmares to real life. At least they were interesting.

It was going to be a bitter, windy day. The sky was almost black, but for the slowly rising sun, and would ascend into a pale grey by midday, the colour all the more heightened by the heavy gold curtains that hung at either side of the window seat. Will sat at the plush window seat with too many cushions, wishing he could be anywhere else than here.

'Here' was the Grand Palace, in the city of Myras, the capital of Achénone. Achénone, the largest country on the continent, with a larger population than the other countries on said continent put together. Achénone, which accounted for about 45% of said continents food supply, and around 60% of the entire worlds' precious jewel intake from the mines in the Blessed Mountains. Achénone, of snow capped mountains and sprawling dark forests; of meadows and lakes so blue they almost outshone the azure sky.

And Will would one day rule over it all as King.

A long sigh escaped his chest as he slumped down into his window seat. Things were bad enough already as Prince.

As if reading his thoughts, the prompt knock of Zeller, who guarded his door. Fuck. Was it that time already? “Come in!” he called.

To his relief, the usual small army didn’t file in today, but only his closest companion, Anthony. Anthony was a bastard Beta son of their father, bearing similar features to Will, but through a much more handsome lens, in Will’s view. He had been born 8 years before Will, but there was no jealousy in Anthony’s heart against him, no fear of replacement. Why would there be, when the king took little to no interest in his children in the first place? In fact, Will felt he was his closest friend in this court of twisted thorns and brambles.

Anthony smiled. ‘You look so relieved.”

Will shrugged, getting up from the window seat, leaning against the wall. “Who wouldn’t be? Half the court’s usually in here by now, for the dressing ceremony.”

Anthony squinted at him, his eyes in his pockets. “Its a Sunday, remember? Are you alright brother?” When Will merely looked down, not answering, Anthony walked to stand beside him, in front of the window.

“Nightmares again?”

A pause. “Yes.”

“The same ones? With the stag, and the blood?”

Another, longer pause. “…Yes.”

“Hm. Perhaps you should see the court physician.” When Will replied by glaring at him with eyes like ice, Anthony merely chuckled. “Alright, alright. But perhaps tell father?”

Will snorted at that, striding away to his closet, opening it and selecting dark, practical clothes. “I can’t believe you just said that, Anthony. Father hasn’t really been involved in my personal life since I was what, ten? -“ He spun around to face Anthony, his mouth quirked in a sarcastic half smile “-Why start now?”

And with that, he walked to his washroom, shutting the door definitely. Anthony slowly walked towards the washroom door. “I fear for you sometimes, Will.” He said loudly, so his younger brother could hear. “With me being gone so often to university, I feel as though you are often…alone.”

“But that’s how I like to be.” Will called, as he scrubbed his face in the sink.

“Ha ha. Funny.” A pause as Anthony examined a scuff on his shoe closely. “Will, you must listen to me. Perhaps it is time to…make friends within the court. They aren’t all bad.” Another pause. “I don’t want you to be without a friend. You can write to me any time Will, but…I must live my own life, and letters aren’t enough. You need people.”

“Well…I have Beverly and…the horses, and the dogs…and…”

“Miss Katz who works all day, and who is far from being a member of the court, Will. And you may be content for the large majority your friends to be animals who smell of shit, but I am not.”

“Well. That sounds like your friends to me.”

“Ah, but since you are my closest friend, you are the most...shitty smelling animal. Ha.”

“Touché.” Will smiled as he came out of the bathroom, fully dressed in neat dark clothing, attempting to drag a comb through his wild curls.

Anthony laughed, clear and strong. “Will, seriously. You will be king someday. It could be soon-father gets older everyday. You need people to like you. You need people who will support you. If you will not make friends with father, you need other influencers.”

Will squinted at him suspiciously. “Anthony. Why…are you bringing this up now?”

Anthony cleared his throat. “I may have sent everyone in the court invitations to a grand dinner hosted by you. I used your seal on the letters…"

Will raised his eyebrows. “Well. I was wondering where that was.” His hands came up to his face, and he rubbed his eyes. “Anthony…Why did you do this...?”

“There is…talk in the court, Will. I may only be the court poet, and a bastard son, but even I overhear important conversations. Many dislike you and believe you will be an awful king. That’s dangerous Will. This dinner will improve your regard amongst the court. I knew you would never agree if I didn’t act a little sneaky. If you play your part, which I hope you will, you’ll be thanking me when you become king.”

Will threw his comb onto a small mirror next to his closet. A long sigh. “When is it anyway?”

“Next week.”

The days passed in a flurry. Anthony left for university again, leaving Will to organize the dinner himself. As he watched the Beta enter his carriage, Will could not help but think that Anthony should have been the prince, the future king. He was smart, talented. He was confident, charismatic, and adored by the court, a bastard though he was. He thought of things like strategic parties to make the court like you.

But, even as he picked out musicians to perform, with the head court musician Tobias Budge’s help, and the placement of the tables in one of the larger dining room, Will could not help but have little faith in Anthony’s plan. He could see how a dinner party could help towards a grudging acceptance: but the court would never like him, never look at him in any other way than with pity, jealousy, or anger.

That is how they looked at him now, most of them gathered in the day throne-room. This is where the king and court would sit in the morning, and anyone who had business with them could enter, and speak his business before his father, King Ezra. The king, who sat now, his young Omegan mistress by his side, laughing and giggling at whatever shit he was spouting. She had blonde hair. Brown eyes. Pretty, in a soft, curved sort of way. Nothing like the paintings of Will's mother. Mistresses usually weren't taken well in court, but Will's father was…the king. He was allowed to disobey the rules: he made them, after all.

Will internally rolled his eyes, and returned to his book, although he wasn't really following it properly, but looked up as Matthew Brown, a trusted guard in his quarters entered, and kneeled before the king. Following him were several others in servants attire, who also kneeled. And that was when Will first saw the Omega, kneeling at the right of Brown.

He didn't know how he knew the man was an Omega. Omegan men were quite rare in the first place, but he didn't even look especially Omegan at first glance. He had hollow cheekbones, dark, hooded eyes, pale eyebrows. But actually, Will thought, you could see the classic Omegan of sculptures and fine oil paintings, if you looked the right way. A full, defined, strangely curved mouth with a rosy colour. The cheekbones, although hollow, were feline in their height and curves. He had long, lithe limbs, honey-hued skin with an olive tone. Fine, soft-looking sandy hair. He was exotic, in a way. And his eyes were boring holes into Will.

Avoiding eye contact, Will's eyes dropped to his shoes, and then focused on his father, glancing back to the Omega, once, twice. The omega was looking at his father now, seemingly innocently, as his father welcomed the new staff Brown had escorted from the city, as was custom.

Everyone who lived or worked in the palace was brought before the king at first entry. After that, he didn't give a goat's shit as to what became of the people who worked for him, only that they were doing their job. The responsibility for that fell on the shoulders of Ms. Sabrina Katz, Beverly Katz' mother, and the head housekeeper of the palace. She waited towards the side of Will, and glanced at him, smiling a little, as she walked past him to usher the new staff out of the room through the servant's door.

Of course, Will didn't notice any of this, as he was too fascinated by the male Omega, his mind only half tuned into what his father was saying. There was something about the man. He was exotic, yes, but Will wasn't sure that was only to do with his looks. Something about

the way he sat, straight-backed and completely still, or the way that his eyes remained cold and removed, as if he were somewhere else inside his head. ‘Like me’ he thought. Yes, the Omega’s eyes remained cold, even for their warm colour, but his face was animated, smiling…

Hang on. Was the Omega trying to flirt with his father? Will did another internal eye roll. ‘Good luck with that one, my friend’ he thought, glancing over to his father, his hand caressing the blonde girls hair. ‘He seems enamored with his girl. And anyway, you aren’t really…his type.’

Yes, male Omegas were certainly not frowned upon, but…it would not be proper for a man of honour, such as a king, to be seen with one. But still, the Omega pursed his lips, pushing his body forward slightly-not noticeably, at least to most people. Will sighed. Just another Omega throwing themselves at his father’s feet, then. Not that most people would notice him doing this; but Will was gifted at reading people, noticing the little things they did. He’d had an entire lifetime of observing. And he observed now, as the Omega tilted his neck slightly, this way and that, wetting his bottom lip. A tall, imposing Alpha sitting near him was clearly trying his hardest not to stare at the Omega.

Will strangely felt something like fire burning deep inside of him. He hated this Omega suddenly. Suddenly, the man seemed to represent all the failings of his father, of his ignorance of Will, of his pursuit of meaningless activities and relationships. He represented the infuriatingly mind numbing workings of the court, of the stupid games everyone played. He represented Will’s failings of what people expected him to be, as a prince, a son, even an Alpha. And deep down, Will knew that there was something else there: something else that made his pulse race, and blood boil, but he was not conscious of it at the time. All he seemed to feel was a strong dislike for this Omega man.

And he hadn’t felt anything in so long.

But Will quickly tried to disregard that. He was clever enough not to blindly follow his feelings. The Omega was just trying to survive the best he could. Anyway, its not like Will would be talking to him much. Being an Omega, he would most likely end up working as a general servant, or perhaps in the kitchens.

“Will? Will?” his father called over to him, backed by stifled laughter and soft snickers from the court.

Will started, sitting up in his seat, book falling to the ground with a loud clap, causing a fresh wave of laughter from the court. Will sighed-this didn't affect him much anymore, not after enduring it for 21 years. That didn't mean he liked it, however. "Yes! Sorry…father." He murmured after registering the disappointment in his fathers eyes, not concealed at all. Will looked down, away, anywhere.

"I was just talking about how it will be pleasant to have some fresh faces working in your quarters."

Will swallowed, feeling something drop like a stone in his stomach, although he wasn't too sure why. "Yes…It will. Be. It will be." More poorly-stifled laughter from the court. Will found it difficult to speak in front of crowds, unless it was about something he was passionate about, like a book, or scientific development, or a plan to feed the homeless in the city during Yuletide.

But specifically, now he was speaking in front of the Omega who he had just been deconstructing in his head. The Omega who had made him feel this strange, intense feeling. The Omega who was now staring directly at him, with eyes like dark red pins. Will hadn't noticed the red tones before.

His father's mouth moved as he looked at Will, and then turned back to his mistress, and conversation resumed in court. But as Sabrina Katz led the line of servants through the servants door, Will could not hear, as the Omega's eyes burned into him,and as his mouth jerked into a small smirk.

Chapter End Notes

MY DUDES! THE FIRST CHAPTER OF MY FIRST FIC! YAYY!

Anyway, I would really appreciate it if you kudosed, bookmarked, commented. (Constructive criticism is welcome.) I'll love ya forever if you do.

Love, Lena

Chapter Two

Chapter Summary

Hannibal's backstory and entry into the palace.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The cold bitter winds howled outside the window, as Hannibal Lecter fucked himself onto the Alpha below him’s cock.

Hannibal was born in the middle of a winter storm, just like this one.

The wind had howled, and his mother had screamed, and Hannibal had been delivered, a healthy Omega boy.

His parents were delighted, in spite of his ‘odd’ gender. They loved him. And Hannibal had loved them.

But the greatest love in his life was for his baby sister. Mischa. She was born when Hannibal was just 6, a spring child, an Omega, just like him. She was perfect, and Hannibal adored her. When she looked up at him with her blonde curls, and round dark eyes, and tried to say his name (‘Anniba! ‘Anniba!) Hannibal though his heart would burst.

They had played in the gardens together: Hannibal could remember showing her the purple aubergine, how she was fascinated by the colour. Remembered his mother speaking in a quiet voice as she read them both fairytales, nestled against her warm side. Remembered sneaking into his father’s study, and his father catching him. Hannibal sat on his knee and helped him write letters.

And then it all went wrong.

Hannibal was 11 years old.

His whole world burned, as he, with the eyes of a young boy, watched. Achénon soldiers invaded their country, without warning, taking it for their own, attempting to slaughter all royalty, anyone who could have a claim to the throne in the future. Lithe stood no chance against the Achénon soldiers.

But he managed to get away, far away, and eventually his uncle and his wife, Murasaki, found him. They too had seen their world crumble, and other countries fell every day. They moved to Jeris, and when it was taken over, they ran to the next country, and the next. It all melded into one endless stream of rubble, and smoke, and the stench of fear and death.

But finally, the Lecters found safe passage to Murasaki's home country, Niron, a large country across the sea, not yet attacked by Achénon, and able to defend themselves. They were welcomed with loving arms by the royal family, Murasaki's family, and life vaguely resembled normalcy, for a while.

Robert taught him painting. They ate every night together with Murasaki's brothers and father, as a family. He even courted one of the court members for a while, and slept with many. Their court was much more relaxed than many others. It was a good life.

But deep down, Hannibal wasn't happy. Not truly.

Murasaki recognized the rage and sorrow that Hannibal held, and she took him under her wing. She was almost like a mother to him. She tutored him in many fine arts, such as music, dancing, flower arranging, and how to kill someone with your bare hands.

This, of course, was very useful to Hannibal, as he wanted to kill the king, and the people who murdered his family-he knew they were royal soldiers. Murasaki wanted it too.

"The way to do this," she said one day, as he combed through her long black hair, "is to infiltrate them. Poison them from the inside. You cannot walk in and put a sword through the

king right there and then: they will kill you on the spot. And anyway, we have a whole royal family and army to exterminate. You must control your rage. We must find another way."

"Another way?" Hannibal enquired, the comb stilling. "Like…like what?" he said, resuming the repetitive motion, but she turned and stilled his hand with her own, her dark eyes serious.

"You must go to the palace. Alone. Work there. As a servant. No one will recognize you; it has been so long." When Hannibal frowned, looking away, she gently took his chin and tilted his face back towards her. "You must become close to the king. A trusted position."

"But…how..?" he stopped when he saw her eyes darken. "No. No."

Murasaki sighed. "It is the only way. I have only trained you for this."

"No. Not for this."

"I have trained you in the ways of the palace, how to fight, how to kill. I have trained you how to be a pleasing Omega. You must become one of the kings' mistress'. He is very good to them, close to them. He will tell you things he may not tell you if you were in any other position. And he will not speak to you at all if you are just a lowly servant. I would go in your place, if I could, but I am too recognizable." When he didn't reply, she said "Hannibal. This is what we have both worked for. What we both want. Its for the greater good. They killed your family, my mother and sister. This is our chance, your chance…to get revenge. Closure."

Hannibal looked down, mulling it over. "I suppose you are right. But I won't go right away." He said, wrinkling his nose.

Murasaki smiled, stroking his face. "My brave boy." She petted his hair.

"I love you." Hannibal murmured.

“I know.”

So they had practiced and talked over everything in the next few months. How to serve wine properly. How to aim to kill with a bow and arrow. The languages and dialects of the nation. How to suck an Alpha cock. Everything.

And Hannibal stood on the wooden docks, his ship about to leave, as Murasaki and Robert hugged him goodbye. The last memory he had of them was how they turned into pricks of black as his ship drifted away, Murasaki’s musky perfume still lingering around him.

The journey had taken a month. Alone, Hannibal missed his aunt, but he was 24 now-no longer a lost little boy. He managed. Hannibal only had to stop once, in Dvorjak, a very small country on Achénon’s continent, and change ships. Luckily, Myras wasn’t too far from the nearest port village, and he travelled the rest of the way by foot.

And now he was here, in this little inn room in the city of Myras, Achénon, pushing himself down onto this Alpha because he was the consultant who interviewed those who wished to work as servants in the palace. But it meant nothing to Hannibal; just another Alpha, a means to an end. Hannibal smiled, lifting his head to the ceiling, baring his neck. The plan was working out well.

So of course, this Alpha had immediately recommended Hannibal to the guard Matthew Brown who had come to the city to collect them. Matthew Brown was an average looking Beta who came into the room in the inn where the successful were gathered.

“Hello everyone, I’m Matthew Brown, a guard at the palace. I’ll be escorting you there today. Can I take everyone’s names first?”

The assortment of women (and Hannibal) gave their names, which Brown noted in a small leather journal. Hannibal gave his as ‘Hannibal Euras.’ They would not remember the small prince Hannibal, but they would remember the Lecters.

To get to the castle, they had to walk up a long street that tilted upwards on a slope. They huffed and puffed through the city, until they were at the royal gates, huge and iron, guarded by four Alphas. They then had to trudge up a grey glittering path flanked by dark forest, until they came into the front royal gardens, the sight of which made everyone gasp, even Hannibal.

It was colossal. Even in midwinter, it was impressive, mostly due to its size. There were many bushes of flowers that had yet to bloom, but were still neatly kept by the gardeners. The grey drive led up to the palace, the granite bricks the same colour as the sky.Many could not conceal their wonder at the gigantic palace with its bluish-gray slate roof and dozens of glass windows.

Step by step, they made their way up. “Where will we work?” a young Omega said.

“The prince, William, is in need of some new staff.” Brown replied. “He is a friend of mine, and I have picked you myself, so don’t let me down.”

“You’re friends with the prince? Wow…”

Hm. Interesting. The prince’s quarters. Not much was known about Prince William outside his court: he had only just turned of age. At least Hannibal would be working for someone close to the king.

As they approached the front doors of the palace, again flanked by many guards, they marveled at the glossy sheen of the dark wood, the door’s engravings of kings and queens, of forests and wolves.

Hannibal found it a bit basic. For his tastes.

The doors swung open to reveal the main throne room- a huge room of stone with two golden thrones at the far end. It was empty. “This is the throne room. Only used for very formal occasions, really. This way, come on, hurry up.” Brown said, ushering the enthralled group to follow him, as he walked towards a door on the left side of the room.

A few paintings hung in here. ‘Of the current royal family.’ Hannibal thought. There was the king: aging, grey-bearded. Most likely a lot less handsome and purposeful than the painting suggested. A few Omega women giggled at a portrait next to it, however. Prince William. A much less ornate painting than the one of his father. It almost looked as if he was a lawyer, or doctor, some distinguished, clever profession. Hannibal sincerely doubted the accuracy of this portrait also, even more than the King’s. His skin was too smooth, and his curls too voluminous. His eyes were crystal blue, and his jaw strong, and his shoulders broad. Hannibal rolled his eyes internally as the other Omegas giggled again, before hurrying after Brown, Hannibal following.

Brown led them to a pair of similarly carved, albeit smaller, wooden doors. “This is what we call the day throneroom.” He said. “Here is where you will be presented to the king and court. After that, never speak to them again-unless spoken to.” He frowned, continuing. “Try not to offend them-Please be serious.” He looked pointedly at the Omega girls, who promptly silenced. “Everyone stand behind me. In a line. Good. Okay, here we go.”

Two guards flanking the doors pushed them open and they entered. Walking down the parting between the chairs and couches where the court sat, Hannibal kept his eyes straight ahead, looking towards the king. He was smiling, not looking their way.

Hannibal tried to relax.

Blood rushed to his head, his heart pounding in his ear, it felt like. He felt like a rope was being wound around his chest and pulled tight. Here was the man who, when it came down to it, was responsible for the death of his family, the oppression of his country, so many other countries. Hannibal tried to control his breathing, and he could feel his hands shaking, so he put them in his pockets.

It was a long walk from the doors to the thrones. It seemed like miles to Hannibal. But he tried to focus, remembering what Murasaki told him. After thinking of Murasaki, of his task, of the expectations of him, he focused.

And he felt something like a lead weight drop in his stomach.

The king's mistress, a pretty blonde girl, sat next to him. He was whispering something in her ear, and she was laughing. His large hand caressed her hair, and he looked like he was in love. He was in love, that much was clear. Perhaps not with this girl actually-she was too young, but with someone who reminded him of her.

Fuck. Fuck. This was not part of the plan.

Hannibal felt like crying, and he never cried. He tried to keep his face motionless-

He could feel someone watching him.

His eyes drifted about, until they settled on the prince. Prince William.

'The Alpha is like his portrait; but then again,' Hannibal thought, 'it wasn't that handsome.' He wasn't exactly the perfect Alpha anyway. He seemed melancholy, lonely, antisocial, which he showed in the way he looked down, at the book clutched in his hand, his face red when Hannibal-a lowly servant in Will's eyes-looked at him. He was blushing. God. How pathetic. It suited him though. He looked almost Omegan, with his pale skin and blue eyes. A pretty Alpha. Ironic, seeing as he would be the future Alpha king. Was supposed to be the strong, stereotypical Alpha. He looked boyish. Young. Vulnerable.

The prince was trying not to look at him, but was failing. Hannibal arched his body, twisting his neck subtly as he 'listened' to the king's speech. From the corner of his eye, he saw how the prince watched, how Hannibal unsettled him.

Perhaps there could be a change of plan.

His Royal Highness seemed so…vulnerable. So alone. Hannibal could make him need him. He wasn't sure about the king. And anyway, it was more secure to get in with the future king…to exterminate the future of the Achénon bloodline. Yes. Hannibal would write to Murasaki tonight, informing her of this change.

The servants filing away startled Hannibal, although he didn’t show it-he’d been considering the prince, and his own predicament, so deeply. And as he walked past Prince William in his throne, he couldn’t help but smirk at him-really for his own amusement.

Chapter End Notes

Second chapter! This is mainly focused on Hannibal, just to explain him etc, but the next chapters will be more plotty etc.
Thanks for all the nice comments! I'm glad you guys like it.
Please comment, follow, give kudos! Im sure Bryan Fuller would want you to...
Love, Lena.

Chapter Three

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Sabrina Katz led Hannibal and the other future servants to a small wooden door, which led to a long and narrow corridor. The group automatically assembled into single file: there was no other possible way they could fit.

"I am Ms. Katz." Sabrina called out behind her. "You will all be working in Prince William's quarters-as a coming of age present, his father had several rooms restored for him, sort of created a private annex-anyway. You will be his staff. There is a kitchen and pantry, a drawing room, a parlour, a dining room, a study, a library, a music room, and a bedroom."

A girl coughed in disbelief; a young man's eyes widened. "That's…a whole house." someone whispered.

They turned a corner. "You will all be given a room to attend to: it is your job to make sure it is clean and tidy, that the fires are lit, and that anyone in there is well attended to." Ms. Katz continued pleasantly. "You will all share kitchen duties, for lunch, and private dinners up there. The family always eats breakfast together. We have hired a cook: however any of you with experience of cooking may be required to help from time to time. If you are done with your duties with His Royal Highness, you will be required to help throughout the household. There are always things that need to be done. We are walking past the main kitchen currently: it is through these doors to your right." Everyone looked to their right at the closed doors. "You will also be required at parties and special events. You have Wednesday evenings off-that's when the Royal Family leaves for the chapel."

She stopped at the end of the corridor when they came to another discreet door, painted grey as to blend in with the granite walls. Forcefully, she pushed it open, and it led to a winding staircase. It seemed like it finished at the sky. Ms. Katz promptly headed up. "This way." Hannibal and the rest followed, many hugging themselves due to the frigid temperatures that only seemed to get worse as they climbed up the wrought iron staircase.

They entered into a room that was decidedly warmer. A simple corridor with light wooden floors, doors of the same wood, and whitewashed walls. Ms. Katz stopped, and turned to Hannibal and the others, all seven of them huddled in a group. "This is where you shall

sleep.” She said. “The rooms are quite comfortable, and there is one for each of you, so don’t worry. You may leave your things here just now, but I must allocate rooms. I believe we have seven Omegas with us today yes? Can I take everyone’s names please?” she said, fishing a small notebook out of her apron pocket, as well as a pencil.

“Elise Nichols.” A girl with long dark hair raised her hand, and Ms. Katz pointed to one of the doors. Elise walked to it, opening the door and setting her bags inside.

“Beth LeBeau.” The same for her.

“Gretchen Speck.” The same.

“Hannibal Euras.” Ms. Katz looked up, momentarily surprised at the deeper voice, but then went back to her notepad, calling out the next name while pointing to his room. He got a room on the far corner, and he walked to it, opening the light door.

Inside was a fairly small, but pleasantly comfortable room. The same wooden floors and whitewashed walls. A wardrobe and a bed, with white linen sheets. Even a desk, next to the bed. And a huge window streaming light over it all, on the wall that the bed ran alongside. So, they were very nice to their servants here. How lovely.

Such a shame the same couldn’t be said for Hannibal’s family. Or his country, the countless other countries.

Hannibal quelled the dark swirling inside him that so often arose at such thoughts. He hadn’t been able to until Murasaki. Murasaki, Murasaki. He unconsciously fiddled with the beaded bracelet she had given him before he left. Remembered her tying it around his wrist in the dark early morning, her hair falling about her face.

A deep, lonely pang moved through him, somewhere far inside, as he put his bag on the blank sheet of the bed. He realized in that moment how completely alone he was, how he had no one he could trust around him.

But he could not think of that now. Squaring his shoulders, breathing deeply, he left the room to join Ms. Katz and the other Omegas.

"Before I show you the Prince's quarters, a word about him." The older Omega woman said, facing them all.

Hannibal looked up attentively.

"Prince William is a good man. You are lucky to be serving him. He is courteous, kind to those who are he same to him. But…he is a very private, solitary man. Try not to bother him too much, or talk to him too often. He is…shy, and prefers to be left alone mostly." She paused, obviously trying to find the correct wording for what she was about to say.

"I am aware that he is a very attractive Alpha male," many of the girls stifled giggles, "but, as to the customs of our land, he is to be married by the time he is 23. He is currently looking for a wife. So…no flirting." She smiled at the Omegas, beckoning with her hand for them to follow as she left the small corridor, back into the frigid stairway.

They climbed up a flight of them, already shivering. She took a ring of keys from her apron pocket, unlocking a glossy wooden door, pushing it open.

When they entered, many of the Omega's eyes widened in wonder. They had entered into a fairly simple corridor by royal standards, but the quality of the hand-painted satin wallpaper, the dark, polished wood, the matching carved wooden furniture, was most likely better than many of them had ever seen. The door at the other end of the corridor, obviously the one by which the prince would enter, painted with gold and blue tastefully against the coffee-brown wood. She gave them each a key, telling them which room the key was for, but the girls still stood, dazed at the grandeur.

Hannibal was focused, however. 'Bedroom, bedroom, bedroom.' He thought silently to himself. She smiled when she came to him. "You seem…more responsible than the rest." She said, quietly, conspiratorially. "So I've decided to give you the most used room-Hannibal is it?"

He nodded, putting on his most gentle and lovely smile, ready to accept the bedroom key.

“Here is the key to the study. The prince spends much of his time in there. The door is behind you, on the left.” She beamed, moving onto the next Omega.

Hannibal stood momentarily, holding the key, internally groaning. Luck was not on his side today. Well, she did say it was his most used room. But a study did not strike Hannibal as… particularly amorous. And so, Hannibal resigned himself to his fate, opening the door to the study and stepping in, closing the door behind him.

It was a large, airy room, with one large window that almost stretched across the whole wall opposite from where he stood. The walls were a dark brownish colour, the floors dark wood. A few bookshelves lining the walls to the left and right of Hannibal, a desk by the window with a curious tall set of drawers next to it. A bureau next to the door, on Hannibal’s left. Hannibal actually audibly sighed. So he’d spend all of his time dusting bookshelves, and cleaning wooden floors, instead of what he was sent to do. What he had to do-what he would rather do than clean, if he were being honest with himself.

But before he could chase that thought, Ms. Katz was calling them back into the hall.

“Just a few more things.” She said. “You can find cleaning supplies in the closet off of the stairs. Up at 6AM every day, bed at 10 or 11, usually. You will have three meals a day, and you will all eat in the kitchen, or you may eat outside on warmer days, if you like. I live downstairs, in the main servants quarters. If you have any problems, come to me. You have today off to settle in, and anyway, the prince is officially moving in today. I’m sure he would like to say hello, so stick around.” She smiled. “Welcome! You are dismissed.”

But before Hannibal could turn and begin to figure out his next move, Ms. Katz stopped him. “Hannibal Euras! May I talk to you?”

Hannibal gritted his teeth, but turned, a polite smile on his face. “Yes madam?” he enquired, the picture of Omegan politeness, folding his hands behind his back.

“I hope I do not offend but…an assistant in the stables is needed, just for a couple of hours, every day. I understand it’s not exactly Omegan work, but you look strong and seem capable.” She chirped, as Hannibal almost rolled his eyes. “My…my daughter is a female Alpha. She looks after the horses.” She added, talking quickly, averting her eyes.

Ah. So that’s what was going on here. Ms. Katz was trying to play matchmaker for her lonely daughter. You see, female Alphas were extremely rare, rarer even than male Omegas, and far more ostracized because of it. Low fertility combined with low levels of strength. Male Omega’s strength was often seen as an advantage-they could better protect their young, their nests. But still, being ostracized people, if female Alphas were found, their mates were often male Omegas.

Hannibal was about to decline, but then she continued. “She-she is a very good Alpha, strong, beautiful. The prince holds her in very high regard; they are close friends, since they were children. In fact, he’s at the stables with her almost every day. I hope that’s not too… daunting for you.” She said, as the last girl left through the door to the servant’s staircase.

Hannibal’s dark eyes flitted to her, glee barely concealed. “Of course. That sounds lovely madam. I love horses.” He smiled, laughing slightly, but internally he was practically shouting with joy.

After the morning court, Will practically bolted outside to the stables, to Beverly. Beverly was Will’s best friend, apart from Anthony. They were like twins, thick as thieves since they were children. Many a time Will had been swatted at by Beverly’s mother, Ms. Katz, for stealing a cake from the kitchen or some other mischief, only for Beverly to peek out from behind him. And they had learned to horse-ride, to fish, to climb trees together.

He could always count on her, and her on him. She had cried on his shoulder when she realized she only liked other Alphas, and he had held her close, petted her hair. And now, he walked to the stables where he knew shed be, confused, dazed. He didn’t understand what he was feeling, and Beverly could always sort him out.

But when he finally reached the wooden gate that was the entrance to the sturdy stone mass of the stable, he paused. He looked at Beverly, who hadn’t realized he was there yet, forking hay into a trough on the wall. For some reason, he had a tightness in his chest, a lump in his throat. She turned, and smiled. He smiled back.

He couldn't tell her. He didn't want to tell her.

What? He couldn't tell Beverly about the strange encounter with the Omega? Will wasn't sure if it was the fact that really, he was slightly attracted to the Omega, or just the Omega himself, or the way he had smirked at Will. Or perhaps it was…the intensity of this feeling. He hadn't felt so much in such a long time. He didn't even know how to explain what he was feeling, in words. He imagined that this is what compelled composers to write music, or artists to paint, the strength of….this thing, whatever it was.

But he shook it off. He was in the stables, with Beverly, familiar territory.

"Hey…Will. You okay? You seem…"

"What? I'm fine. I'm-fine. Yeah."

Beverly's brow lay heavy over her eyes as she looked at him with a shrewd perception gained through lifelong perception. "Come on. Yesterday you were fine. You weren't acting…weird. Has something happened?" She tossed him a bridle, and Will approached his horse.

Will stroked a pale hand down the horses nose. His was a beautiful horse, chestnut with a white stripe down her nose, and white socks. A glossy dark brown mane. Her name was Ailsa, a name he had seen in a very old book of fairytales as a child. It had always stuck with him: a tale of an Omega princess who drowned herself to be with her lover, a spirit of the ocean. He stroked her nose, and contemplated the Omega this morning.

"I'm fine, Beverly." He said steadily, attaching the bridle to his horse, a lifetime of doing it almost daily making it a quick job.

Beverly was saddling her horse now, having already brushed all of them down and attended to their needs. "Well, when you feel like talking-"

They both looked up at the noise from outside the stable. “Oh god, its mother.” Beverly said, crouching behind her horse, attempting to hide. “Do you think she’s brought me a new Omega bride who’ll run away screaming at the sight of me?”

Will chuckled, remembering the petite blonde girl from a few months ago. She was very pretty, actually. Not that Beverly would ever notice that.
But all thoughts of a pretty petite girl were obliterated from his head when Ms. Katz entered with the male Omega.

“Your Highness!” she said bowing, clearly for show for the Omega beside her.

There he was. The same alpine cheekbones, slender strange face, dark eyes like the darkness found between trees in a dense forest, that seemed to burn into Will, scorching him, tracking his every movement. Will stood up straight, nodding to them, concealing his trembling hands behind his back.

“-so lovely to see you. This is Hannibal, Hannibal Euras, who will be working in your-“

Will pretended to listen to her, but his thoughts were consumed by the Omega-Hannibal. Hannibal, Hannibal. Ha-nni-bal. He sounded out the syllables slowly in his head. What an odd, beautiful name. Fitting for the Omega before him, who’s features would seem the opposite of Omegan beauty to many, but somehow perfect to Will. He was fascinating. Hannibal.

Hannibal seemed to be studying him keenly as well. Beverly was called out by her mother, but even Will could feel her lack of interest, her suffering from her mother’s desperate attempts to get her to marry. And even though the Omega’s attention completely seemed to be on Beverly and her mother-was it? Was Will misinterpreting all of this?-he could see Hannibal arching his chest slightly, hands on his hips, emphasizing his trim waist, pursing his plump lips slightly as hee emphasized certain words-but was this for Beverly? Did he-or was it for Will? Was he trying to show himself off at all? If he would just look at Will…’Just look at me, please, let me feel you looking at me again…’

Will watched him, almost feverishly interpreting every small movement, every word, or at least he tried to. This Hannibal was difficult for Will to read, which was frustrating and surprising and…

Refreshing. Challenging.

Will was almost drowning in the Omega, watching without looking, so when he realized they were all looking to him for an answer to a question he did not hear, his face grew red. “I-I’m sorry, what was that?”

Hannibal looked at him, frowning a little, his head tilted, lips parted, plump and pink, like the blush on his high cheekbones from the cold. His mouth looked so soft, like petals. Will wanted to lap at that mouth, at the open seam-Fuck. What was he thinking? He shook himself out of it.

“-was wondering how you like your books to be arranged? I am in charge of your study, and Ms. Katz informed me that your books are being brought up tomorrow-Do you like them by name, by author, Your Highness?” Hannibal finished, blinking innocently. Was he blinking? Or was he batting his eyelashes? Or…did Will just want him to be batting his eyelashes.

That voice. It was deep, for an Omega, but velvety and rich. With a strange accent to it that Will couldn’t place-oh god, that voice. It sent a shiver through his body, the cause of which he still was not sure of-at least consciously.

“I’m not sure. I suppose…Ill come help you tomorrow and see what I would like.” He said, trying his best to keep his voice and face steady.

Hannibal looked pleased. He didn’t smile, but something in his eyes quietly changed. “Of course, your Highness.”

There was an awkward moment of silence where they all just stood, looking at each other, Beverly trying not to die of mortification. And Hannibal locked eyes with Will, just for a second, but it was enough. Enough for Will to feel fire cascade through his body, sing in his blood, crackle along his bones and alight every nerve.

Hannibal looked a little startled, too. Or it could have been Will’s imagination-that’s what he thought as Ms. Katz excused herself, tugging the younger Omega with her, somehow, even in her ignorance of Beverly’s sexuality, still aware that this had not been the outcome she had wanted from this meeting.

And as Hannibal strode away, Will thought he saw his head turn as if to look behind him, but stopped halfway, so Will could only just see the outline of his eyelash, the shadow of the curve of his feline cheekbone, a slight mound of his plump mouth. Stopped as if he was hesitant, as unsure as Will.

'Or perhaps,' Will thought, 'I'm just desperate to think he feels the same as I do.'

Chapter End Notes

Aw yeah, third chapter! It got a Little Bit Steamy at the end there ! hehe not really, anyway I'm not sure if I'm loving this chapter but I just wanted to get it out since I have SO much work to do and i didn't want to keep anyone waiting. I've had a lot of kudos n some nice comments and even some bookmarks so thank you everyone for that! Thank you so so much, you have no idea what it means to me to know like SOMEONE out there is enjoying this. I hope this chapter was pretty Good/Ok.

Love, Lena.

Chapter Four

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal was led away from the stables quickly by Ms. Katz.

"Well, you may help there in the mornings, if you like. Beverly needs the help, and you said you liked horses?" she called over the whirling wind.

Hannibal nodded, smiled, not really listening. His mind was on Will. The prince had clearly been affected by Hannibal's presence. Once again, the Alpha's cheeks had flamed crimson at the sight of Hannibal. But…there was something else. And Hannibal wasn't sure what.

And Hannibal hated being unsure.

When their eyes had connected, Hannibal had felt something jolt through his mind, his body. He ran through the memory over and over. The prince had seemed cautious, reserved, even when Hannibal pseudo-flirted. An odd tension had hung between them, but Hannibal couldn't name it. He had almost looked back as Ms. Katz led him away, but found he couldn't quite do it. Hannibal internally rolled his eyes at himself. A coy glance back could have enticed him further into Hannibal's web. But he found the prince…disturbing, somehow. He didn't want to look back-he was afraid of what the prince might see. Of what Hannibal might have seen himself.

Hannibal had expected him to be like his father: greedily taking any Omega who took his fancy. Had expected him to be like any other male Alpha he had ever met. And again, it was clear that Will appreciated Hannibal. The blush alone told him that. But the prince was… quiet. Accepting of Hannibal, polite, but not overly interested, despite Hannibal's subtle advances. Perhaps he was too shy. This prince was obviously not the type to take what he wanted. Probably still a virgin. That explained the blush, the awkwardness.

That didn't explain Hannibal's reaction to the prince, however.

Most of the time, Hannibal didn't feel much. But when he did, it was like a swirling mixture of different colours of ink: all bleeding together, merging into one lifeless grey-brown until he was back to his muted self again. Or, even worse, a bolt of red anger that blinded and filled him that he could not control. A lack of control was most definitely not something Hannibal favoured.

But Hannibal just felt confused now. Not in the mixed-together grey nothing way. He felt it in a way that set his mind working, that pushed him to figure out exactly what it was he was feeling.

And now he felt uncomfortable, as he stepped into his new room again, sitting on the bed, beside his window. He quickly did away with these thoughts. 'You did not come here for a journey in self-reflection, Hannibal.'

Focus was necessary. He did not want to disappoint his aunt, his dead family, or his country.

He decided to distract himself by looking out the window. His window faced the back of the castle, and it was rather high up, so it offered a remarkable view of the countryside. A dark forest surrounded the castle grounds, as far as the eye could see, and Hannibal felt a pang of something nestled far inside of him. They reminded him of his life in Lithe. There were woods near his home too. Mischa and him would play in them, getting lost in childish games and imaginings, sometimes for a whole day. He could still hear her echoing cry through the trees-her laughter, calling his name, a sharp scream-

Hannibal stopped that train of thought, and instead observed the mountains that could be seen in the distance over the forest. They were lined with snow, like white veins. Hannibal traced his veins on his wrist idly under the sleeve of his woolen jumper. He wondered what it was like there, how high they were. He wondered if the prince had been there: perhaps he could ask him.

The Omega's attention was caught by the sight of said prince, atop a horse slowly trotting towards said forest. Hannibal perked up, leaning against the window, his nose an inch away. He wanted to see further evidence of the prince's feelings towards him. But the Alpha was facing the woods, so Hannibal could not see his face, and the Omega sighed in frustration.

His demeanor was relaxed and comfortable enough: Hannibal frowned. He wanted him to be shaken. Disturbed. That's how he seemed to Hannibal, before…Or maybe...? Was he perhaps

actually not interested in Hannibal? Was it because he was a male Omega? Hannibal fiddled with his sleeve, doubt tugging at him, unusually. No. Hannibal was attractive, he knew this. Alphas adored him.

Still, though….This Alpha had already proved himself unusual in at least a few respects…

Hannibal banished these thoughts. Doubt would do him no good. Eventually, he decided to adhere to what he had first thought: that the prince was lonely, unused to the attention of Omegas. But why? He was a prince, after all. And a handsome one too. (That was only if you took the word of the other Omegan servants. Not Hannibal. Of course.) So why was he so inexperienced?

'What a strange Alpha.' Hannibal thought, not aware that he was smiling slightly, his teeth a small glimmer in the pale bleary sunlight. 'I suppose I'll have to make him fall completely in love with me.'

Soon, the Alpha disappeared into the dark depths of the wood, and left Hannibal churning, scheming, wondering.

As soon as he was done saddling his horse, Ailsa, Will climbed on top of her, riding out, not ignoring but rather not hearing Beverly's startled goodbye. Usually Will would have stayed a while longer with her, but he needed to get out, to think. He rode slowly through the green expanse of the rear gardens, crossing over grass, almost trampling over a flowerbed; he was so deep in thought.

The Omega-Hannibal-troubled Will. When their eyes had connected, Will could not understand the burning he felt, the harsh pull. And, with his 21 years experience of an extremely sheltered life, he could not understand it. Couldn't understand Hannibal. Which was pretty rare, for Will. He could tell there was something…hidden and concealed in Hannibal. Like a green snake slithering through grass, it was there, but barely discernible. Will had always had a talent for seeing people. Really seeing them-their ambitions, wants, needs, hates. Everything.

But not Hannibal-not completely. Why?

And soon, Will and his thoughts lost themselves in the black shadows of the woods, the beat of his horse's hooves pounding out Hannibal's name, Hannibal, Hannibal, over and over again.

When Will returned from his morning ride, it was nearly lunch. He washed, changed his clothing, and quietly mused the library for a while, waiting for time to go by. His ride had refreshed him, cleansed him of his thoughts, and he could hardly believe his thoughts on the Omega had been so extreme earlier. He had only just met him; and anyway, the man was a servant. Not that servant's were any lesser than Will-but it wasn't like they could ever be good friends. Or more. Definitely not more than friends. It would be the scandal of the century-to the court at least. Will doubted that the cotton farmers, who were currently on strike over the price of (guess what) cotton, cared about whom His Royal Highness, Prince William, was consorting with.

Will sighed through his nose as he browsed the books. He wondered what would happen if he ran away with an Omega such as Hannibal. It didn't seem fair that his father was allowed to have mistresses, and Will had to be 'serious and dependable if you can't be likeable' in the senior advisor Abel Gideon's words. Not that Will would ever have a mistress. Or would he? What if he fell in love?

Will hoped he could be in love with his wife. At least he got a slight choice-the 'Choosing Ball' would be held in about a year or so, in which his father and the royal advisors would invite a selection of possible brides, and Will would pick from them. But he had met many of these Omegan women already, and while most of them were fine to be around, and even very beautiful, Will couldn't imagine marrying someone he barely knew.

At this train of thought, his breath caught in his throat. Sometimes, Will still felt like a small child stumbling through, being guided this way and that by those that were more powerful than him.

The problem was, he didn't know how to guide himself.

He wondered if his father had felt like this, at his age. Or perhaps the king had always been the same. Will couldn't ask him, though, couldn't turn to him for guidance or support. As a young boy, Will had been quite close to his father. But then, when he was about 11 or 12, … that was when Lady Bedelia Du fucking Maurier came back to court.

Bedelia had been one of Will's mother Aerlene's Maidens. Maidens were high-ranking Omegan women who served higher-ranking Omegan women. Bedelia had left after Queen Aerlene had died when Will was but a young toddler. And then one day, she mysteriously reappeared, and Will's father was ripped away from him. He had become so involved with her, it almost seemed like he had forgotten about Will. Will knew that this was really his father's fault: but somehow, he couldn't help but feel that Bedelia was responsible, couldn't help but hate her for it. And Bedelia hardly attempted to talk to him: when she did, their short conversations comprised of thorny words and ice cold glares.

Will wondered if she would be like this if his mother was alive.

Perhaps his father wouldn't have had a mistress at all if his mother were still alive.

The loud ringing of the lunch bell jolted Will out of his thoughts, and he promptly made his way to the small dining room. He wondered if he would see Hannibal: he knew some of the servants ate their lunch in the kitchen at the same time as the Royals in the dining room. But of course, Will wasn't thinking of Hannibal anymore, so he promptly stopped that train of thought as he entered the room.

It was a large, wood-paneled room, the walls a warm, earthy brown. A long lacquered table, and cushioned chairs, a couple of silk couches, a fireplace. This wasn't where the dinner party was to take place in two days time, but it was still a grand room, by most people's standards. Two place settings were set-one for Will's father, one for Will. And…Will's father wasn't here, as usual. And, as usual, Will grabbed some of the cold, easily carried food-fruit, bread, and meat-and wrapped it in the several napkins on the table, putting this mini-picnic into his jacket pocket. And as usual, the guards at the door didn't comment on this, didn't say anything, didn't talk to Will. No one ever really talked to Will.

The rest of the day passed normally, inconsequentially. He walked in the gardens, cold and barren as the time of year was, with Leader Jack Crawford, the head of the army aside from Will and his father, and talked of the war. He spoke with Abel Gideon, and the other advisors, about the export of sapphires to neighbouring countries. He went for another ride. He joked about with Beverly.

But still, his mind kept wandering to Hannibal. He hadn't seen the Omega since this morning, but he haunted Will's thoughts. Even when Will wasn't thinking about him, he could feel him there, a ghost in muted colours hovering at the edge of Will's mind. And as Will sat in his new, empty study, in his new, empty quarters, his quill hovered over his barely-started letter, he considered telling Anthony about…this. Yet, for some reason, he couldn't. A part of Will, a low, deep part of him, wanted to keep this a secret-even from Anthony. He wrote about the export of sapphires and his horses instead, signing the letter, folding it and tucking it into an envelope.

He supposed it was time for bed. It wasn't like he had anything better to do.

Hannibal lay in his new, small bed, staring at the stars through his window. The sky was clear tonight-liquid navy, dotted with crystals. The moon shone in a thin sliver of a crescent, partially obscured by Hannibal's windowpane. He wondered if Murasaki could see the moon right now. The Omega ignored the pang that reverbed through him, and instead focused his mind on his task, as Murasaki had schooled him to do.

He would see the prince both in the morning at the stables, and when organizing his books. He had to be ready. Tomorrow could secure the prince's interest in him.

Hannibal grinned, sharp teeth glinting in the moonlight.

The morning came slowly and difficultly. If the state of his bedsheets were anything to go by, Will had an extremely fitful sleep. As he blearily rubbed his eyes, he struggled to remember his dream. It hadn't been the recurring nightmare he had had. Something else. He vaguely recollected flashes of gold, dark eyes, and a burning feeling.

Untangling his legs from his sheets, he rose-and pale sunlight illuminated his new room, an unusual occurrence for Will. His nightmares had stopped, and so he had not woken as early as usual. There was a fire burning-a servant must have lit it while he was sleeping.

Fuck. What if it was Hannibal? His face grew warm at the thought of Hannibal seeing him asleep, seeing the state of his sheets. But he wasn't thinking about Hannibal anymore, and he reminded himself of this as he opened his wardrobe, freshly cleaned and pressed clothes hanging in the carved wooden wardrobe. So, that had already been done too. Cool.

As he looked through his various items of clothing, he thought of what he had to do today. The dinner was tomorrow, and most of the day would be spent checking on its preparations. He would go see Beverly too.

And of course, there were a few odd jobs. Helping Ms. Katz to organize his rooms-making sure she knew the place of things.

Helping Hannibal organize his study.

Will's brow furrowed, and he flicked through his clothes more slowly, taking the time to look at each piece. It wouldn't hurt to look his best. For the new staff. All of them. It was important to make a good first impression, after all. Yes. Definitely. Good idea.

He wondered if the dark green shirt would make him look too pale. Did it even fit him anymore? Perhaps the blue instead.

Will sighed. Clothes were not his area of expertise.

Hannibal had also surveyed his clothing, earlier that morning. The servants of the castle were all given a basic 'uniform' to wear, colours white and brown. He held the white linen shirt in front of him and smiled. White suited him very well.

He reacted with a little more…distaste to the trousers and waistcoat laid out for him. The colour was fine-Hannibal could make any colour work for him-but the trousers were awkwardly tailored, wider and straighter than his slim legs, and the waistcoat was too big. Well. He could make this work.

The shirt was fine, slightly loose. He emphasized his waist by tucking the slightly baggy waistcoat into his trousers, securing it with a wide brown leather belt he had been provided with. The trousers, because of the belt, also poofed out a little to the sides, again emphasizing his waist, but also how slim his legs were. He tucked the ends into his brown leather boots, to hide the awkard shape as much as possible.

Hannibal attempted to look at himself in the faint reflections of his window, but he couldn't make much of himself out. He had brought a small mirror with him, as well as some rouge, for lips and cheeks, but he wouldn't use makeup now. Judging by the prince's reactions so far, that might scare him off. Hannibal had decided that he must look small, delicate, the typical young Omega. The loose fitting clothes would only emphasise this-although correctly fitting would still have been ideal. He sighed through his nose as he took out his mirror, gazing into it.

He fussed with his hair, combing it, then fluffing it up, combing it again, running his hands through it, combing it a third time. The prince had quite messy hair. It was curly, and wild, like a tangle of thorns when it was messy. But much softer and gentler than thorns. Hannibal thought it looked rather silky. He wondered what it would feel like to touch it.

He trailed his hand lightly over his own hair for a moment.

He blinked, and snapped out of it, laying the mirror down on his bed. He looked good, attractive, like he always did. Why was he fussing so much?

The prince was handsome. Hannibal could admit that-he was not stupid. But he was the son of the man who had killed his family, and no pretty hair could distract Hannibal from that. From his task. He could not let Murasaki down, and he could not disappoint his family's legacy.

His resolve set, he stood and left his room, to the study. But his heart seemed to beat faster than the thrum of a hummingbird's wings all the way there. He attributed that to nerves.

Eventually, Will had decided to just throw on whatever. He didn't care, and as he closely inspected his blue shirt for signs of wear, and staining, he stubbornly thought about what he would have for breakfast.

But suddenly, time was passing quickly, and he washed and dressed, half-ran to the main dining room, ate, and all too soon found himself standing outside of his study, muffled sounds of boxes being moved about within.

Will stood in front of the heavy, varnished door, attempting in vain to quell the nervous fluttering of his stomach. Oh god, this was it. He hurriedly smoothed his hair a little, ran his palms down his clothes. Fuck, what was he doing? This was just an Omega-an Omega male servant even. They were just organizing books.

He frowned at how silly he was being, and pushed the door open. Rather too forcefully, in fact, judging by the harsh banging noise of wood against stone. Hannibal, who was kneeling beside one-of-many open-top crates of books, only showed his reaction by his head turning sharply, leaning to the side a little, tensing slitghltly. But-it was unnerving-his expression hardly changed. Only a slight twitch of his right eyebrow betrayed any feeling at all.

“Your Highness.” The Omega said, rising, to his feet elegantly, long limbs moving in a way that somehow reminded Will of birds flying through trees, a river running over rocks, or the rich swirl of silk as it was whirled about. His

Fuck. He was so….What? Beautiful? Yes, but…not just that. There was something else there. Something behind the eyes that spoke to Will, called to him every time he looked at Lecter.

The trouble was, the prince could not figure out what.

“…Hi.” Will eventually replied shortly. “Sorry about-anyway, um, the-yeah the books?” he said, gesturing to the door, before turning shutting it behind him. “Might be a draft.:” he explained, even though it was really just an excuse for a moment of respite from Hannibal’s scorching gaze. God, that was lame, as if anyone would believe that.

“Indeed, your Highness, the books. I have already begun unpacking them, although I was, as I said yesterday, unsure of how you prefer them to be organized.” Hannibal murmured, his voice smooth and deep.

“Yeah. Yes.” Will said, looking at the crates. His eyes flicked up to Hannibal. “So…I guess we’ll start with that one?”

When Hannibal looked up from bending over another crate of books, eyes questioning, Will added “The one in front of you.” He still didn’t meet his gaze, but awkwardly stared at his body instead, and Wow he Should Not Have Done That because he could feel his face heating.

Hannibal was wearing slightly baggy clothing, drawn in tightly at the waist. The loose clothes only emphasized his slender shape. And their bulkiness only seemed to emphasize how much of an Omega he was. The white of his shirt contrasted with tanned skin, the faun of his waistcoat and trousers matching his hair, bringing out the dark honey of his eyes.

And when he smiled, those eyes didn’t change. Will wasn’t looking at them, but he could still feel how cold they were. It almost felt like Bedelia or one of her Maidens eyes on him-like a blade of ice slicing through him. Except he wasn’t insanely attracted to Bedelia or any of her Maidens, and so he let the moment pass as Hannibal softly spoke:

“Of course.” So receptive, so polite. But what was he thinking behind that calm exterior.

Hannibal picked up the crate, and Will moved forward, arms open, offering to take it.

Hannibal paused for a moment, something flashing through his eyes, but then allowed him to take it, another smile from him illuminating the room, false as It was.

Will heaved the box onto the top of his bookcase, frowning. “I guess I’d like to organize them alphabetically, by title.” He was rapidly realizing that he didn’t really need to be here-he only needed to tell Hannibal how he wanted them to be organized.

He internally rolled his eyes as he easily dismantled his awkward excuse to be around Hannibal. God, the Omega probably didn’t even want to be here

Will sniffed as he took one of the books out, pretending to read the back, leaning against the bookcase. He desperately tried to look cool as he spoke.

“I know you probably have a lot of stuff to do. I mean you don’t have to do this, I could do it alone if you like. It’s not that I don’t want…Its not that I don’t like you! I just thought…if you….didn’t want…” He tried to explain, not wanting to come off as rude.

But when he looked back up at Hannibal, there was more warmth in the Omega’s eyes somehow. A spark of something-amusement. Was Hannibal laughing at him? ‘Oh Gods, please don’t laugh at me, I cant think of anything worse, please…’

Hannibal looked beautiful though, as he turned and started taking books out of the box. And Will felt a little happy that he had pleased him. Even if it was a little at his own expense.

And so they passed some of the day together sorting the mounds of books. They worked together well. At first, their dialogue had been stiff and awkward, but soon they became absorbed in their task, and they were more relaxed. Will almost felt like another servant, like a man without a crown, in the flow of his speech with Hannibal. And when Hannibal looked at Will, from a box of books, or from the bookshelf, replying to or laughing at something the Alpha had said, Will felt something glowing deep inside his chest. Glowing, like Hannibal as the golden sunlight streamed through the window, illuminating him, the sight warming Will more than the suns fire.

Chapter End Notes

Wow hey guys. Its been a while. Things are really busy right now, so expect chapter posts to be sporadic for a couple of months. Also im not loving this chapter, but I just wanted to get it out. Some more plotty stuff...but I promise there'll be more Hannibal Will stuff next time.
Comments and kudos etc are appreciated a LOT! Thank you for all the lovely comments last capter <3
Thanks for reading! I hope you are having a great day.

Love, Lena.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!